

The County Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures conducts regulatory and service functions required by California law, plus other duties authorized by county ordinances. Its mission is to protect the agricultural industry, businesses, and consumers of this state and county through regulation, and to help protect the public health, safety and welfare. The citizens of this county benefit by having a good wholesome food supply and a viable food system to serve them. Business and consumers all benefit from uniform, accurate measurement of weight and volume. An effective weights and measures program is one of the most beneficial programs we perform for the general public.

The following information is a brief explanation of the major functions of the Department, with emphasis on services rendered to our urban residents.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Weights and Measures inspections strengthen the economy by maintaining fairness in the marketplace. They protect both buyers and sellers by checking to see that commercial weighing and measuring equipment and practices are accurate and correct. To ensure consumers get what they pay for, many different types of devices are inspected, including grocery scales, gasoline pumps, taximeters, mobile home electric and water meters, and fuel vapor meters. Businesses also benefit by maintaining accuracy in these devices. Truck scales and other business devices are inspected as well. Price scanning equipment is inspected for consistency with marked and advertised prices in grocery, department and other retail stores. Other

activities include sampling petroleum products such as gasoline, diesel fuel, motor oil, brake fluid and antifreeze for required quality standards. Records of persons weighing bulk goods such as sand and gravel are audited and monitored as well.

PESTICIDE USE ENFORCEMENT

Regulating the use of pesticides is a very important program because of its involvement with health and environmental issues. The Department enforces laws and regulations pertaining to pesticides and their use, storage, disposal, environmental impacts, and effects on the health and safety of employees and the general public. Training records for all employees who work with pesticides are reviewed to ensure employee safety. Authorization is required before the use of agricultural pesticides to ensure that no adverse environmental or public health impact occurs and that all pesticide use is reported. Commercial pest control in and around homes and businesses is also regulated in a similar manner.

PEST PREVENTION

Pest Prevention consists of exclusion (quarantine regulation), detection, and eradication. The exclusion, detection and eradication of new and damaging plant pests, such as insects and plant diseases, are necessary to keep crop losses and pest control costs down. All increased costs in production will ultimately be borne by the consumer in the form of high food prices. Commercial crops are systematically inspected and traps are placed in residential plantings so new pests may be found and

eliminated before they can become established in California.

A constant vigil is the best and least expensive way to keep our pest problems to a minimum. Benefits derived from this program far exceed the cost to the general public and help reduce the use of pesticides.

PEST MANAGEMENT

A popular public service the Department provides is the identification of insects, plant diseases and other maladies of plants, as well as recommendations for their control. Many homeowner problems can easily be solved once the pest and its behavior are known. Other Pest Management activities include roadside weed control and the manufacture and sale, at cost, of rodent control materials.

NURSERY AND SEED INSPECTION

Quality plants are available throughout the county at nurseries inspected by the Department. Nursery inspection helps to prevent the spread of pests and ensures healthy, live plants for the public.

The inspection of seeds at packer, wholesaler, and retail establishments helps the public and the agricultural industry obtain quality seeds for planting. Germination level and weed seed contamination are special concerns in this program.

FRUIT, VEGETABLE, AND EGG QUALITY CONTROL

Minimum quality standards have been established for fruits, vegetables, nuts, eggs, and honey. Enforcement of these standards ensures that the public gets wholesome food.

Growers and wholesalers benefit by knowing the quality standards for commercial sales. Also, on request, growers are certified as producing various fruits, nuts, vegetables and other agricultural items. This allows the grower to sell directly to the public at Farmer's Markets. These markets continue to grow in popularity.

MISCELLANEOUS PROGRAMS

Other activities include enforcement of the County Apiary Ordinance pertaining to commercial beekeepers. This ordinance regulates the maintenance of bees, keeping this helpful insect from invading residential areas. Concern over the arrival of the Africanized Honey Bee has increased the importance of this program.

The Department also enforces a soil erosion ordinance in the Chino-Ontario area and in a small portion of the desert.

Additionally, this office is required by state law to compile an annual agricultural production, acreage, and value report. The Annual Crop and Livestock Report is utilized by other governmental agencies, schools, newspapers, real estate, banks, and others interested in agriculture. With this information, these entities can make better decisions and provide enhanced services.

FOR THE CONSUMER - CONFIDENCE
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT - PROTECTION
FOR THE WORKER - SAFETY
FOR THE PUBLIC - SERVICE

DISTRICT OFFICES

These offices are only open during a portion of the day. Please call first.

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE WEIGHTS AND MEASURES



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